

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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O 241055Z MAR 75
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4038
INFO SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
CINCPAC HONOLULU IMMEDIATE
USSAG NKP THAILAND IMMEDIATE
USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL BIEN HOA
AMCONSUL CAN THO
AMCONSUL DANANG
AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

S E C R E T SAIGON 3380

EXDIS - MIL ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE.

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WARNING--SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND
METHODS INVOLVED/NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION.

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2. DECLASSIFICATION DATE IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE
TAGS: MOPS VS
SUBJECT: HIGHLIGHTS OF NVA OFFENSIVE--SUMMARY FOR PERIOD
ENDING NOON MARCH 24.

1. GENERAL.

QUANG TIN, QUANG DUC AND PHU BON PROVINCES ARE NOW
CONSIDERED AS LOST TO THE NVA. TAM KY, THE CAPITAL OF QUANG
TIN, FELL TO NVA FORCES MARCH 24. ROUTE 1 HAS BEEN CUT IN TWO
PLACES BETWEEN HUE AND DA NANG, AND EVACUEES HAVE BEEN FORCED
TO TURN BACK FOR MOVEMENT TO DANANG BY BOAT. IN MR 2, TWO
DISTRICTS, KHANH DUONG AND AN TUC, HAVE BEEN LOST. THE BRIDGE
OVER THE SONG BA RIVER IS FINISHED, AND THE CONVOY FROM PLEIKU/
KONTUM IS EXPECTED TO BE UNDER WAY AS SOON AS THE ONE REMAINING

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INTERDICTION (OF FIVE) ON THE ROAD IS CLEARED. IN MR 3, NVA FORCES

HAVE LAUNCHED DETERMINED ATTACKS IN TAY NINH ALONG ROUTE 26 IN AN ATTEMPT TO BREAK THROUGH TO ROUTE 22 AND ISOLATE TAY NINH CITY. HOWEVER, THE ARVN FORCES ARE HOLDING. ACTIVITY IN THE DELTA CONTINUED TO DECLINE THROUGHOUT THE WEEK-END, AND ONLY WIDELY SCATTERED ATTACKS AND CONTACTS WERE REPORTED.

2. MR 1.

THE PAST 48 HOURS BEGAN ON A SHORT-LIVED POSITIVE NOTE IN MR1, AS GVN FORCES RECAPTURED BONG MOUNTAIN FROM THE COMMUNISTS. FIGHTING ELSEWHERE WAS LIGHT. HOWEVER, THE SITUATION BEGAN TO DETERIORATE ON MARCH 22. HUE WAS SHELLED, AND ROUTE 1 BETWEEN HUE AND DANANG WAS CUT IN TWO PLACES, FORCING REFUGEES ALONG THE ROAD TO TURN BACK, AND SEA TRANSPORTATION TO DANANG FOR MANY OF THEM IS NOW UNDER WAY. THE MOST SERIOUS BLOW FELL ON MARCH 24, WHEN THE CITY OF TAM KY, CAPITAL OF QUANG TIN, WAS TAKEN BY NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES. THE CITIES OF HUE AND DANANG ARE NOW CUT OFF FROM ALL LAND CONTACT WITH THE REMAINDER OF SOUTH VIET-NAM. GVN FORCES IN MR 1 HAVE BEEN FORCED TO PULL THEIR DEFENSIVE LINES IN TIGHTER AROUND HUE AND THE SITUATION THERE IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY SERIOUS. THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES IN DANANG IS ESTIMATED TO BE BETWEEN THREE AND FOUR HUNDRED THOUSAND.

3. MR 2.

THE GVN SUFFERED SOME SETBACKS IN MR 2 IN THE PAST 48 HOURS. THE 40TH REGIMENT AND TERRITORIALS HAVE BEEN PULLED OUT OF KHANH DUONG DISTRICT IN KHANH HOA. AN AIRBORNE BRIGADE HAS TAKEN OVER DEFENSE OF ROUTE 21. PRESSURE INCREASED IN BINH DINH MARCH 22 AND THE GVN WAS FORCED TO ABANDON AN TUC DISTRICT. PHU BON WAS ABANDONED ON MARCH 21 AND QUANG DUC ON MARCH 22. THE GVN CALLED IN AIRSTRIKES TO DESTROY EQUIPMENT LEFT IN CHEO REO, WHICH INCLUDED 175 AND 155 MM ARTILLERY PEICES, TANKS, TRUCKS AND OTHER EQUIPMENT. ARVN ENGINEERS HAVE COMPLETED THE BRIDGE OVER THE SONG BA RIVER, AND FOUR OF THE FIVE INTERDICTIONS ON THE ROAD TO TUY HOA HAVE BEEN CLEARED. THE FIFTH IS EXPECTED TO BE CLEARED SHORTLY. THE REAR ELEMENTS OF THE CONVOY ARE RECEIVING HARASSMENT NEAR SON HOA DISTRICT TOWN.

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4. MR 3.

FOLLOWING A 24-HOUR PERIOD OF RELATIVE QUIET IN MR 3, NVA FORCES LAUNCHED HEAVY ATTACKS, SUPPORTED BY TANKS, ALONG ROUTE 26 SOUTHEAST OF TAY NINH CITY IN AN ATTEMPT TO BREAK THROUGH TO AND CLOSE ROUTE 22, AND IN THE PROCESS ISOLATE TAY NINH. GVN FORCES ARE HOLDING, AND CASUALTIES HAVE BEEN HEAVY ON BOTH SIDES. THE GVN SUCCESSFULLY AIRLIFTED THE 3D BN OF THE 43D REGT,

TOGETHER WITH SOME RF/PF, FROM THE POSITIONS THEY HAD BEEN DEFENDING SINCE BEING FORCED FROM HOAI DUC LAST WEEK. THESE TROOPS WILL BE ASSIGNED TO THE DEFENSE OF LONG KHANH. BIEN HOA AIR BASE RECEIVED TWO ROCKETS MARCH 24 WITH NO CASUALTIES AND NO DAMAGE. LT GENERAL NGUYEN VAN MINH, ARVN INSPECTOR GENERAL, HAS REPLACED VICE ADMIRAL CHUNG TAN CANG AS COMMANDER OF THE CAPITAL MILITARY DISTRICT (SAIGON).

5. MR 4.

ACTIVITY IN THE DELTA CONTINUED TO DECLINE THROUGH THE WEEK-END, AND ATTACKS AND CONTACTS WERE WIDELY SCATTERED. THE LARGEST CONTACT IN MR 4 CAME IN KIEN TUONG WHEN ELEMENTS OF THE 14TH ARVN REGT KILLED 14 NVA/VC WHILE SUFFERING NO CASUALTIES.

6. ICCS.

THE HUNGARIAN ICCS TEAM HAS LEFT THE PHAN RANG ICCS SITE, LEAVING THIS SITE COMPLETELY UNMANNED.

WARNING NOTICE: SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND METHODS INVOLVED/NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION.
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